

# Re:Cover Guidance Document

## Introduction

Re:Cover is an interactive map designed to share information the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority holds on networks of habitats within the National Park. It shows the most important habitats that still occur within the Park's boundaries and how these link to areas outside. Our natural habitats have become fragmented, so Re:Cover also indicates *potential* areas for habitat creation / restoration to improve connectivity between patches of the best natural habitats that remain. The information is provided to stimulate discussion and debate about how best to move towards nature recovery at a landscape-scale, encouraging initiatives that make our key habitats bigger, better and more joined up.

The mapping only shows habitat known at the time of survey and therefore, it is possible not all priority habitat is included, while some habitats may have changed over time. The networks indicate areas of *potential* habitat creation / restoration based on protecting, expanding and connecting 'core' habitat. This does not mean areas outside of these networks are not important and are still in need of protection.

The maps do not show everything that ought to be a consideration in making decisions about land use. [Appendix 1](#) provides a list of possible constraints and guidance which should be considered alongside issues purely concerning nature conservation. It is important to note this list is not itself exhaustive and additional factors may be pertinent such as practical ones regarding soils and slope or the cost of particular measures.

## Limitations of the map

Re:Cover focusses on priority habitats and provides only limited information on designated sites. The map omits information on factors which may place constraints on the suitability and design of land management objectives. Some examples are Historic Environment, Priority Species, Breeding wader habitat, Public Rights of Way and Landscape Character. These and other terms are explained in the glossary in [Appendix 2](#).

There are other statutory designations than those presented on the map. Landowners can check for these on Defra's mapping site [MAGIC](#). Please note that work within SSSI land and/or changes to management may require Natural England consent.

Re:Cover does not replace the information provided on the Defra mapping website MAGIC. For grant applications the layers on MAGIC override any data provided here.

The habitat networks shown sometimes overlap one with another. When this is the case landowners would be well advised to obtain further information / advice on the best options to maximise biodiversity benefit. It is often possible to manage the land to improve several types of habitat at once as opposed to focussing on one to the detriment of another.

## About the layers

### Existing Habitat layers

Each layer has been created using data from the YDNPA's most recent Habitat Map with the exception of the woodland layer (see below). For areas in which the Authority's Habitat Map holds no data this has been supplemented with data taken from Natural England's 'Priority Habitat Inventory (PHI)'. Each layer covers the Yorkshire Dales National Park boundary with a 5 km buffer. This is in order for connectivity to be visible for those areas on or near the park boundary.

Each layer was created to include specific habitats as detailed in Table 1. Follow the links for descriptions of each habitat type. Due to many land parcels having mosaics of different habitats it is possible for them to appear on more than one layer. For example a parcel might contain woodland and species-rich grassland – and in circumstances like this further advice would help to clarify what is the best management option from a biodiversity perspective.

The Woodland layer contains the Forestry Commission's 'National Forestry Inventory (NFI)' data. All non-woodland data has been removed and gaps in data have been filled with recent YDNPA Habitat Survey and New Native Woodland data. All woodland types have been included and shown for the individual parcels on the map. The definitions of the different woodland types can be found in [Appendix 3](#).

**Table 1: List of the nine habitat layers and the principle habitat types used to create them.**

<b>Habitat layer</b>	<b>Habitat type</b>
<a href="#">Blanket bog</a>	Blanket bog
<a href="#">Calaminarian grassland</a>	Calaminarian grassland
<a href="#">Calcareous grassland</a>	Lowland calcareous grassland / Upland calcareous grassland
<a href="#">Limestone rock</a>	Limestone pavement / Limestone rock outcrops, cliffs & scree
<a href="#">Meadows &amp; Species-rich grassland</a>	Upland hay meadows / Lowland meadows & pasture / Species-rich grassland (meadow & pasture).
<a href="#">Purple moor-grass</a>	Purple moor-grass & rush pasture
<a href="#">Upland Heath</a>	Fragmented Heath / Upland Heath
<a href="#">Wetland</a>	Upland flushes, fens & swamps / Reedbeds / Lowland raised bog
<a href="#">Woodlands</a>	All woodland

### Network Layers

Core habitat was combined with a 'zone of opportunity' to create blocks of habitat with potential connectivity which form the basis of each network. The core habitats are the parcels above a minimum area in which the habitat can function properly. The zone of opportunity was created by applying the distance in which a habitat's associated species are able to move.

7 network layers have been created from their corresponding habitat layer. These have all matched the principle habitat types except the Heathland network is based on Upland Heath only and the Woodland network which is based on broadleaved woodland alone.

Each network has had known priority habitat and large urban areas removed. They also provide information of the network area and the number of core habitats which exist within each network. This provides users with an indication of the extent and potential connectivity the land within may contribute to.

### Woodland Opportunities Map layers

A group of layers have been created to indicate the likelihood for woodland creation. The Woodland Opportunities Map is split into 3 categories. 'Category 1: No Planting' are areas which have constraints which make woodland creation highly unlikely. 'Category 2: Sensitive Sites' have constraints which may be compatible with woodland however would need detailed planning and consultation. 'Category 3: Opportunity Score' are the areas which are highly likely for woodland creation and have been scored based on the constraints and opportunities in each area.

Regardless of the category or score all woodland creation schemes will still undergo the full consultation process. Due to the complexities of these layers a separate guidance document is available [here](#).

The layers provide information on category type; the opportunity score (if applicable); and links to the guidance document.

### Other layers

The Natural England layers have been included to provide additional information on two of the designations within the National Park. The designations are Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Ancient Woodland. These layers are linked to the source material and are owned and updated by Natural England.

A group of layers under the heading 'Advice and support' have been included to provide links to landscape scale projects, advice and potential funding within the National Park.

### **Using the map**

On opening the map all layers will be switched off other than the background map and National Park boundary.

A specific location can be searched for by entering a post code into the Search feature. Alternatively, you can use the pan and zoom tools to manually find a site.

Each of the Habitat layers can be switched on individually to show the areas in which that habitat exists. By clicking on a parcel of land information is provided on: habitat type(s); area; source dataset; the year of last known survey; and if it is 'core' or 'non-core' habitat.

The relevant Network layer can be overlain to show the areas for *potential* habitat creation or restoration to increase connectivity and resilience. By clicking on a network information is provided on: network type; area of the network; and the number of existing habitats within the network.

It is recommended the Woodland Opportunities layers all be viewed together and turned on/off as a group.

Additional layers can be switched on for extra information. Each Natural England designation layer should be viewed independently from one another due to their lack of transparency.

PDFs of the map can be created at a range of scales under the print function.

The Habitat layers are available to download under an [Open Government Licence \(OGL\) v3.0](#).

## **Appendix 1 – Potential constraints and guidance** (Please note this list is not exhaustive)

### **Constraints which *may* affect the suitability of land management objectives**

- ❖ Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Works affecting these may require [consent from Natural England](#)
- ❖ Limestone Pavement Orders (LPO) restrict activities on or near limestone pavement. The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority is responsible for these Orders. Please contact the Authority's Wildlife Team for advice at [wildlifeconservation@yorkshiredales.org.uk](mailto:wildlifeconservation@yorkshiredales.org.uk).
- ❖ Public Rights of Way
- ❖ Historic Environment – [YDNPA Historic Environment 'Position Statement'](#)
- ❖ Priority Species
- ❖ Upland breeding wader habitat

### **Guidance documents**

- ❖ [Afforestation on or near priority habitats](#) – Forestry Commission
- ❖ [Afforestation and important wader sites](#) – Forestry Commission / Natural England
- ❖ [Landscape Character Assessment](#) – YDNPA
- ❖ [Woodland Siting and Design Guide](#) – YDNPA
- ❖ [Public Rights of Way Landowner responsibilities](#) – GOV.UK
- ❖ [Peat restoration information](#) – Yorkshire Peat Partnership

### **Suggested layers on [MAGIC](#) related to *potential* constraints mentioned above**

- ❖ Designations - Land-Based - Statutory
- ❖ Designations - Land-Based - Historic
- ❖ Habitats – 'Priority Habitat Inventory'
- ❖ Species - 'Upland Breeding Bird Areas for CS'
- ❖ Species - 'Priority Species for CS targeting' for redshank, snipe, curlew and lapwing

## Appendix 2 – Glossary of terms

<b>ANCIENT WOODLAND</b>	-	<p>An area that has been under continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD. These are either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW) mainly made up of trees and shrubs native to the site, usually arising from natural regeneration.</li> <li>• Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) - replanted with conifer or broadleaved trees that retain ancient woodland features, such as undisturbed soil, ground flora and fungi.</li> </ul>
<b>BREEDING WADER HABITAT</b>	-	<p>Upland habitat with the required range of features wading birds such as Curlew, Lapwing, Redshank and Snipe need to breed. These species are nationally in decline and their breeding habitat is important to stabilise and improve their populations.</p>
<b>DESIGNATED SITES</b>	-	<p>Nature sites and areas of countryside can be 'designated', which means they have special status as protected areas because of their natural and cultural importance.</p>
<b>FORESTRY COMMISSION</b>	-	<p>The government department responsible for protecting, expanding and promoting the sustainable management of woodlands.</p>
<b>HABITAT SUITABILITY MODELLING</b>	-	<p>Modelling uses environmental factors such as land use/land cover, elevation, and topographic position together with randomised sample data to depict the <i>probability of occurrence</i> of a target species across a specified study area.</p>
<b>HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT</b>	-	<p>The archaeological aspects of the environment which provide a historical record of human activity. This includes statutory designations such as Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and Registered Parks &amp; Gardens.</p>
<b>LANDSCAPE CHARACTER</b>	-	<p>A method for classifying and describing the distinct and recognisable pattern of elements, or characteristics, in the landscape that make one landscape different from another. Examples of characteristics include geology, soils, land cover, hydrology, historic and cultural development.</p>

<b>LIMESTONE PAVEMENT ORDERS</b>	- A designation under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 which protects limestone pavement for its geological interest and the unique habitat it provides for wildlife.
<b>NATIONAL FORESTRY INVENTORY (NFI)</b>	- A rolling programme designed to provide accurate information about the size, distribution, composition and condition of forests and woodlands in Great Britain.
<b>NATURAL ENGLAND</b>	- The government's adviser for the natural environment in England, helping to protect England's nature and landscapes for people to enjoy and for the services they provide. Natural England is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs.
<b>PRIORITY HABITATS</b>	- Semi-natural habitat types identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.
<b>PRIORITY HABITAT INVENTORY (PHI)</b>	- Combines data from a variety of sources to create a national dataset which shows the geographical extent of the habitats of principal importance. The PHI is published and updated by Natural England.
<b>PRIORITY SPECIES</b>	- Species identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.
<b>PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY</b>	- Defined routes which the public have the right to access for walking and other leisure activities. These are broken into four categories and each allows specific activities: footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways, byways open to all traffic.
<b>SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (SSSI)</b>	- Land designated by Natural England as having features of special interest for wildlife, geology and/or landform. These are the sites which support rare and endangered species, habitats and natural features. SSSI's are protected by law and each site has specific management requirements and operational conditions.

## Appendix 3 – Woodland Habitat Layer

### Summary

The woodland layer contains all known woodland within the Yorkshire Dales National Park boundary plus 5 km buffer. It is based on the Forestry Commission's 'National Forestry Inventory (NFI) - 2018' and supplemented with the Authority's most recent Habitat Survey and New Native Woodland data.

### Definitions:

**NFI categories** (extracted from the FC NFI specification)

- Assumed woodland - The supplied grant scheme and FC new planting polygons have been attributed as 'assumed woodland' as these areas have not been checked against the latest images and will be monitored in future updates and either updated to reflect forest type or removed from the dataset.
- Broadleaved - The canopy of broadleaved woodland is generally more uneven than that of coniferous woodland being made up of rounded crowns but with variations according to species, age, height, and season. Boundaries with adjacent internal polygons are generally less clearly defined than with conifers and naturally occurring stands may grade into adjacent ones with no sharp division. Some coniferous trees may be present but greater than 80% of the area will consist of broadleaved trees.
- Conifer - Coniferous woodland often occurs as large plantations with trees in regular rows and the stand edges may be regular and sharply defined. Some broadleaved trees may also be present but greater than 80% of the area will consist of conifers.
- Mixed Predominantly broadleaved - The interpretation of Mixed woodland can be very difficult as it exhibits intermediate characteristics between Conifer and Broadleaved woodland. There can be several types of mixed woodland. A plantation of alternate rows of conifer and broadleaves may produce a 'striped' appearance. You may see conifer and broadleaves planted in blocks, and there may be general intersperse woodland. The proportion of the Broadleaves will be more than 50% of the area and less than 80%.
- Mixed Predominantly conifer - The interpretation of Mixed woodland can be very difficult as it exhibits intermediate characteristics between Conifer and Broadleaved woodland. There can be several types of mixed woodland. A plantation of alternate rows of conifer and broadleaves may produce a 'striped' appearance. You may see conifer and broadleaves planted in blocks, and there may be general intersperse woodland. The proportion of the Conifer will be more than 50% of the area and less than 80%.
- Young Trees - Areas where planting is clearly visible but the trees cannot yet be allocated between Conifer and Broadleaved due to their immaturity. These areas can be on either land new to woodland or where a felled crop has been replaced.

Please note the NFI has many other categories which have not been included here. This is either because they are not found within the National Park or because they concern non-woodland or areas where woodland is not confirmed.

## Additional YDNPA categories

- Broad-leaved plantation – Broad-leaved woodland whereby planted trees exceed 20% of the canopy composition.
- Conifer plantation – Conifer woodland whereby planted trees exceed 20% of the canopy composition.
- Landmark woodland - designed and planted woodland, visually prominent in the landscape (often located on promontories or hillsides). It includes copses, shelterbelts and shaped woodland features characteristic of the local area.
- Mixed plantation – a combination of broad-leaved and conifer woodland whereby planted trees exceed 20% of the canopy composition.
- Native semi-natural woodland – woodland with semi-natural characteristics including planted trees as long as they do not exceed 20% of the canopy composition.
- New Native Woodland – Areas of broadleaved planting undertaken within the past 10 years and not shown on the NFI. These may not be shown on the NFI due to size, non grant funded or being more recent than the last update.
- Upland mixed ashwoods – woods on base-rich soils in the north and west, in most of which ash is a major species, although locally oak, birch, elm, small-leaved lime and even hazel may be the most abundant species. Yew may form small groves in intimate mosaics with the other major tree species and alder may occur where there are transitions to wet woodland.  
[UK BAP Priority Habitat.](#)
- Upland oak woodland - characterised by a predominance of oak and birch in the canopy, with varying amounts of holly, rowan and hazel as the main understorey species.  
[UK BAP Priority Habitat.](#)
- Wet woodland – woodland which occurs on poorly drained or seasonally wet soils, usually with alder, birch and willows as the predominant tree species, but sometimes including ash, oak, pine and beech on the drier riparian areas.  
[UK BAP Priority Habitat.](#)
- Wood pasture & parkland - mosaic habitats valued for their trees, especially veteran and ancient trees, with open areas of grassland or heathland.  
[UK BAP Priority Habitat.](#)

Full descriptions of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) Priority Habitats can be found by clicking the links provided.

The YDNPA data will show the date of last survey, where known.

## **Appendix 4 - YDNPA Historic Environment 'Position Statement'**

One of the special qualities for which the National Park was designated is its rich cultural heritage. From the highly visible iconic stone field barns, small drystone walled fields, lumps and bumps of previous farming practices and lead mining remains to the many more features unseen by those without a trained eye, grassed over or buried under moorland vegetation, it is an important part of the landscape fabric. Our picturesque villages are important for their historic buildings and for the remains buried underneath but still discoverable by excavation. In all, this forms an important resource in contrast with archaeology in the lowlands where it is fast diminishing under the rapid expansion of towns, cities and big infrastructure. The historic environment, as we call it in general, is an irreplaceable resource which, unlike some aspects of wildlife, cannot be reproduced and often cannot be improved so the best we can do with it is to stop the rot and maintain it in a stable condition for the benefit of future generations.

What this means is that planting trees, restoring peatlands, digging scrapes for ground-nesting birds, changing meadow management or putting in new shooting tracks may have an impact on anything from individual archaeological feature to an entire landscape. For instance, some features like the earthworks of continuous field systems, can extend for several miles under stone walls but an individual burial mound or barrow can measure just a few metres across.

The Historic Environment Team is keen to support environmental improvements that benefit us all, whether it is flood management, improving habitat or creating new woodlands, whilst being concerned to ensure that the precious and finite historic resource is not diminished by doing so.

Where to go for advice:

Advice is based on a unique set of information called the Historic Environment Record (HER) which contains tens of thousands of records of archaeological sites, buildings, structures and landscapes in the National Park, held on a database continually being added to and displayed on mapping software. Please get in touch if you want us to do a search of your proposed project area and offer advice on potential impacts and mitigation. We are able to make site visits, conditions permitting.

We work closely with our own Wildlife Team and Tree Officers and advise Natural England on Countryside Stewardship applications and the Forestry Commission on woodland creation and management. If you have a project in mind, we suggest that you contact the Historic Environment Team as soon as possible when you know which area you will be working on and have a clear idea of what you want to achieve. The team has dedicated staff trained to advise on archaeology in agri-environment schemes, tree planting, peatland restoration and the like.

Please email [herinfo@yorkshiredales.org.uk](mailto:herinfo@yorkshiredales.org.uk) or ring 01969 652362 or 01969 652360.

**Early consultation is key, enabling time and resources to be assigned at the right time so as not to cause unexpected delays or expense.**

Designations:

There are a number of historic environment designations that may occur on your land, administered by different bodies and which are held digitally by the YDNPA on the HER. However, you may want to check for yourself and these are the places to go:

- Some large areas of countryside in the Yorkshire Dales are designated as Conservation Areas where consent may be required from the National Park Planning Department for certain works - the Settle-Carlisle Railway, Swaledale and Arkengarthdale and Littondale. Others are confined to villages and to see which areas are covered go to [www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/about/heritage/cultural-heritage/conservation-areas/](http://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/about/heritage/cultural-heritage/conservation-areas/) For planning advice go to [planning@yorkshiredales.org.uk](mailto:planning@yorkshiredales.org.uk)
- Archaeological sites may be designated as Scheduled Monuments, for which Historic England has overall jurisdiction and provides consent for certain works. Contact [yorkshire@HistoricEngland.org.uk](mailto:yorkshire@HistoricEngland.org.uk) including for the Cumbria parts of the National Park.
- Buildings and structures may be Listed which is a planning designation requiring permission via the YDNPA planning department. Certain grades will come under Historic England but the Planning Department can advise. [planning@yorkshiredales.org.uk](mailto:planning@yorkshiredales.org.uk)
- Some gardens and parklands are on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens and planning permission may be required for some activities. [planning@yorkshiredales.org.uk](mailto:planning@yorkshiredales.org.uk)

You can search by name or on a map for Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and Registered Parks and Gardens at [historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/](http://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/). We can provide initial advice on proposals but may signpost you elsewhere if necessary.